

Christian Community

A Program Service of the Council for Social Action of the
Congregational Christian Churches, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.,
and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the
Evangelical and Reformed Church, 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio

Volume 1, No. 7

September-October, 1949

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION IN YOUR LOCAL CHURCH

HELPS FOR YOUR OBSERVANCE

FOR UNITED NATIONS WEEK

No one thing you can do for world peace is more important than helping to provide an informed public opinion and a resolute backing for the United Nations. October 17-24 has been proclaimed **United Nations Week**. October 24 has been designated an international holiday. October 23 is the churches' **World Order Sunday**. To help you plan the observance in your church read the splendid leaflet enclosed with this issue. It was prepared by William Loos, a member of the International Relations Committee of the Council for Social Action.

Our churches were influential in the establishment of the United Nations. The organization remains our best hope of international justice and peace. Let us make good use of United Na-

tions Week for creating the knowledge and understanding without which the U. N. cannot fulfill its great promise!

FOR WORLD ORDER SUNDAY

A copy of the Federal Council's **World Order Sunday Message** is enclosed. We urge that, as a part of your observance, this splendid message be read from the pulpit. Additional copies should be ordered directly from the Federal Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., or from the Commission on Christian Social Action, 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio, at one dollar per hundred copies.

Incidentally, the **Message and Findings** of the Cleveland National Study Conference on the Churches and World Order contains many timely suggestions for thought, study, and action.



UN General Assembly in Session at Flushing, N. Y.

By Huber F. Klemme

This year more local churches than ever before will give thought to developing a program of Christian social action. The two-fold pressure of God's guiding and man's perplexity suggest that in every parish prayerful planning in this vital area is a top priority. Assuming that you—pastor, social action chairman, or group leaders—feel this necessity, what will you do to get such a program under way?

Call Your Committee Together

The social action committee should meet as early in September as possible. If yours has not already met, call it together at once. If you have no standing committee on social action in your church, this may be a good time to form one. (The chart on page three suggest one plan of organization, with emphasis on close cooperation with the lay organizations and working groups in the church. You may have a better plan. The success of any plan depends on challenging the strongest leadership to take part.)

Consider Your Function

At least once a year it is well to list the functions of such a committee as yours, to evaluate your past programs and to discover where you need to broaden your effort. Under each heading, ask yourselves such questions as these:

a. *Study.* Are we providing sufficient resources to inform the committee members? Are we making the fullest use of *Christian Community* and *Social Action*? Have we failed to order (or re-order) *Social Action*, *Information Service*, and other useful periodicals for committee use? (See the excellent list of resources on pages 30 to 35 of the May, 1949, issue of *Social Action*.) Can we

get additional "experts" to serve on our committee? Are our committee meetings as helpful as they might be? Could we become more proficient by making individuals or sub-committees responsible for specific areas of research?

b. *Education.* Are we keeping social relations, local, national, and worldwide, before the congregation in the most effective way? How can we improve our use of literature table, reading room, posters, bulletin boards, and items in the parish paper? Do we need greater variety of subject and method in our public meetings? Could we make larger use of forums, study classes, and visual aids? Should we form additional study and action groups around the specific interests shared by a portion of the membership? (See *A Handbook for Small Discussion and Action Groups*, available from CSA, 289 Fourth Ave., New York.) Are we using the *Social Action* display card to interest new readers?

c. *Action.* Do our efforts get past the "talk" stage? Are we working on the important issues? Are our emphases *timed* correctly? (*Legislative Action Service*, 1751 N St., Washington 6, D. C., helps keep us informed as to the legislative time-table.) Is our interest and appeal too limited to enlist all the potential support in the community? What needs to be done in our community? In the state? On the national scene? How do we best go about it?

Plan Your Activities

It is important to come to some general agreement as to the emphases and high points in your program of activities for the year. Many of these will group themselves naturally around certain seasons and special days. (See the *Social Action Calendar* and the suggestions for observing World Order Day appearing in this issue of *Christian Community*.)

Other activities will need to be placed strategically in terms of the general political and economic situation and the special opportunities of your own church. A study group might be organized early in fall to run through until Christmas, using a textbook like Alfred Schmalz's *Christian Practices*, or the *Message and Findings* of the Cleveland Conference. A church night program might be sponsored, with a featured speaker, or social action films and filmstrips, such as *Mr. Harris Joins the Human Race*, and *The People's Charter*.

If your congregation is small, or your committee is just getting started, it is better to cut your teeth on a few projects

and do them well—say, one community concern (such as, better recreation, sponsoring a "DP" family, or housing) and one broader interest (Point Four, or the Civil Rights program, for example.) But always be prepared to expand your outreach when the need presents itself, and to give priority to the most urgent cause.

Topics for Discussion

Here are some of the subjects that will be very much alive during the coming year. The alert committee will be on the lookout for resources and ways of handling them:

"The President's Point Four Program" (See October issue of *Social Action*.)

"Religion in the Public Schools." (Watch for Prof. Erwin Shaver's article in the next issue of *Christian Community*.)

"The American Indians and Their Rights." (See January issue of *Christian Community*.)

"Where Do We Stand on Civil Rights Legislation?" (Consult *Legislative Action Service*.)

"Christian Principles in Labor-Management Relations." (See *The Church Looks at Industrial Relations*.)

"Where Is Our American Economy Going?" (See March, 1950, issue of *Social Action*.)

A SOCIAL ACTION CALENDAR

| MONTH | SPECIAL DAYS AND SEASONAL EMPHASES | SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES | PRINTED RESOURCES |
|----------------|--|--|---|
| September | 4 Labor Sunday Fall Planning | Distribute Labor Sunday Message Committee Meets to Plan Year's Program | Labor Letter <i>Christian Community</i> |
| October | 2 World Communion Sunday 18-20 UN Seminar 23 World Order Sunday 23-30 United Nations Week | What Are You Doing About DPs? Distribute World Order Day Message World Order Forums, Workshops, Study Groups | October Issue <i>Social Action</i> "Point Four" |
| November | 24 Thanksgiving | Attend an Economic Life Seminar Conduct or Cooperate in a Social Action Institute | <i>Christian Community</i> : "Religion and the Public Schools" |
| December | 25 Christmas | | |
| January | 15-21 Church & Economic Life Week | Register Your Social Action Committee | |
| February | 7 Churchmen's Wash. Seminar 12 Race Relations Sunday 19-25 Brotherhood Week 22 Ash Wednesday: Lent Begins | Distribute Race Relations Message Plan Inter-Racial Activities Conduct a Study Group on "The Christian Basis of Social Action" | January <i>Social Action</i> issue on Inter-racial Churches See February Issue of <i>Christian Community</i> |
| March | 7 Rural Washington Seminar 12 Nation-wide Day of Sharing | Watch Legislative Developments Have You Met Your Goal for World Relief? | <i>Legislative Action Service</i> |
| April | 9 Easter 18 Churchmen's Wash. Seminar | Synod and State Conference Meetings | <i>Social Action</i> : "How to Stop the Waste of Our National Resources" |
| May | 14 Festival of the Christian Home 14 Rural Life Sunday | Christian Family Life: Housing Stewardship of Natural Resources | Watch for Special Pamphlet See April <i>Social Action</i> and <i>Christian Community</i> |
| June | 28 Pentecost 26-30 General Synod | "Social Action in the United Church" | |
| July August | 2 Christian Citizenship Emphasis | Send Leaders to Summer Training Schools and Institutes (Deering, Fisk, Madison, etc.) | |



ORGANIZING FOR SOCIAL ACTION

"What Does the National Housing Program Mean in Your Community?"

"Facing the Alcohol Question."

"Homes for Displaced Persons."

Are You Up to Standard?

What a social action committee does depends on its resources—time, opportunity, personnel, and ingenuity. It has been suggested that every church should have a social action committee and that every such committee should strive to meet at least the following minimum standards (check yourself against them):

- ... It consists of at least three persons, whose names and addresses are registered with the denominational social action office, to receive *Christian Community*.
- ... It holds at least four meetings a year.
- ... It conducts one forum or other church-wide program each year.
- ... It cooperates in a community project.
- ... It secures 2% of the church membership as subscribers to *Social Action*.
- ... It sends an annual report of its activity to the national office.
- ... It sends at least one person to a Social Action Training Institute, School or Seminar.

These represent *achievable* goals, most of them well within the compass of every church, requiring small outlay of funds and effort. Naturally, many committees will not stop there, but go on to more ambitious levels. Why not start now on the way to being an *active* social action committee?

Where Will You Get Help?

There are many publications and agencies available to help the committee that wishes to work. Most obvious of all is your denominational social action agency, the Council for Social Action (C-C), 289 Fourth Ave., New York, N. Y., and the Commission on Christian Social Action (E&R), 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio. Write to either of these for secure social action handbooks, to register your committee, to get *Christian Community*. Order *Social Action* through the New York office only.

For the departmental publications, write to the respective secretaries: for *Legislative Action Service*, to the Rever-

end Thomas B. Keehn, 1751 N St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C.; for *Labor Letter*, to the Reverend Francis W. McPeck, 1164 E. 58th St., Chicago 57, Illinois; for *Christian Agriculture* and other material on agricultural relations to the Reverend Shirley Greene, Merom, Indiana.

For information on local and state issues, you should get in touch with your local or state federation of churches, and with such agencies as the League of Women Voters, which seek to bring reliable information and sound judgment to bear upon current issues. Organizations of labor and minority groups often give publicity to news and opinion which are not generally in circulation.

An especially useful service is a ten-dollar subscription to the *Literature Associates* of the Federal Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y., which brings publications of all departments to the subscribers for a year. If you cannot invest that much, secure at least *Information Service*, two dollars per year (same address).

LEADERS TRAIN FOR SOCIAL ACTION

Pastors and lay leaders of our churches who are concerned to render a more effective community ministry participated in a number of significant summer training programs.

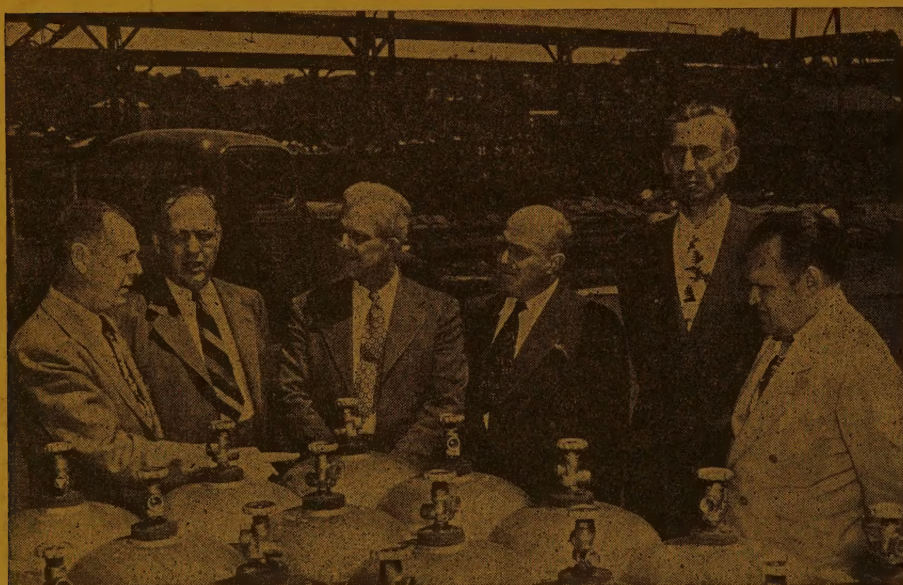
At Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 57 pastors and staff members engaged in the Second Workshop on the City Church conducted by the Board of National Missions and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Field trips included visits to housing projects, the Harrisburg Steel Corporation plant, a state

hospital, and an industrial school for boys.

At Fisk and at Lincoln University representatives of churches and community organizations participated in Summer Institutes of Race Relations, while at Madison, Wisconsin, Francis McPeck held up the "church" end of the discussion in the Industrial Relations Institute for Church leaders.

At Deering, New Hampshire, CSA's School for Social Action brought together social action committee members including a strong group of lay men and women.

Pastors at Harrisburg Workshop Visit Steel Plant



Hill

A RICH EXPERIENCE FOR YOU!

If you would like to have first-hand acquaintance with the United Nations, if you would like to meet and hear top-flight experts on international affairs, here is your chance! The department of international relations of the Council for Social Action offers its second **WORLD ORDER AND UNITED NATIONS SEMINAR** on October 18-20 in New York City. Letters of warm appreciation were received from those who attended the first seminar, held last April. Among the speakers were: John C. Bennett, John Foster Dulles, Warren Austin (Chief of the U. S. delegation to the U. N.) Cord Meyer, Jr. (President of United World Federalists) and State Department experts.

The program on October 18-20 will

be on the same high level. It will include meetings in New York and a full day's visit to the U. N., including a meeting of the General Assembly. You will go home feeling that you have had a rich and unforgettable experience. The only cost to you will be your transportation to New York, the short trip to Lake Success, your meals and lodging—lodging arranged for you at very reasonable prices. The seminar will begin at eight p. m. on Tuesday the 18th and close with dinner on the 20th.

Write to Herman F. Reissig, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York, for the full program and other details. Attendance limited to thirty. Note that this seminar comes in the week preceding World Order Sunday, October 23.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Requests for regular mailings or additional copies for Congregational Christians should be addressed to Ray Gibbons, Director, Council for Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York. Requests by Evangelical and Reformed, and others, as well as news items and communications, should be addressed to the Editor, Huber F. Klemme, Commission on Christian Social Action, 2969 West 25th Street, Cleveland 13, Ohio.

See the U. N. in Action!

The Council for Social Action is anxious to help you plan group visits to the United Nations, and will arrange for over-night accommodations, background briefing, and a guided tour at Lake Success. Write to Mrs. Herman F. Reissig, Council for Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York.

Young people should be at least in the high school junior age range. Parties of more than thirty people are inadvisable. Beginning September 20 the U. N. may be visited Monday through Saturday—during the eight or ten weeks of the General Assembly sessions.

You are urged to write early so that your trip can be carefully scheduled.

Coming in SOCIAL ACTION

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| September | What is a Christian College? |
| October | Program for Underdeveloped Countries |
| November | Homes for White Collar Workers |
| December | Making Your Job Significant |
| January | "Color Blind" Churches in America |
| February | Morals and World Politics |
| March | Three Roads to a Stable Economy |
| April | How to Stop the Waste of Our Natural Resources |
| May | The Drinker and his Religion |
| June | A Christian Looks at Industrial Relations |

Subscription \$1.50 per year; Canada \$1.60 per year. One to 9 copies, 15c each; 10 to 49 copies, 12c each; 50 or more copies, 10c each.

Correction

Please make the following changes in the list of economic seminars announced in the last issue of Christian Community.

American Economics Association, New York, N. Y., December 27-28.

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, Chicago, Illinois, January 9-10.